

CLAIM LISTING

1. (Currently amended) A tampon pledget comprising an inverted coverstock, said inverted coverstock comprising:

an insertion end; and

a removal end,

~~wherein at least one of said insertion end and said removal end has one or more pleats~~
wherein said insertion end and said removal end each have one or more pleats.

2. Cancelled

3. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 1, wherein said one or more pleats is about 1 to about 20 pleats.

4. (Currently amended) The tampon pledget of claim 3, wherein said one or more pleats is about 6 to about 10 pleats.

5. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of non-absorbent materials and a plurality of absorbent materials.

6. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 5, wherein said plurality of non-absorbent materials and said plurality of absorbent materials are blended together.

7. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 6, wherein said plurality of non-absorbent materials and said plurality of absorbent materials are present in a percent ratio about 25/75 to 70/30.

8. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 6, wherein said percent ratio is about 40/60.

9. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 5, wherein said plurality of non-absorbent materials includes a plurality of non-absorbent fibers, and wherein said plurality of absorbent materials includes a plurality of absorbent fibers.

10. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 9, wherein said plurality of absorbent fibers are about 0.5 to about 30 denier.

11. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 9, wherein said plurality of absorbent materials are rayon fibers having about 1.1 to about 1.5 denier.

12. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 9, wherein said plurality of non-absorbent fibers are blended with a plurality of rayon fibers and a superabsorbent at a percent ratio of about 40/42/18, respectively.

13. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 12, wherein said superabsorbent is in the form selected from the group consisting of powder, granular, fiber, and any combinations thereof.

14. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 5, further comprising a surfactant that is added to said plurality of non-absorbent materials and said plurality of absorbent materials.

15. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 14, wherein said surfactant is a nonionic surfactant.

16. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 15, wherein said nonionic surfactant is selected from the group consisting of one or more alcohol ethoxylates, alkylphenol ethoxylates, carboxylic acid esters, ethoxylated anhydrosorbital esters, glycerol esters, poly(oxyethylene-co-oxypropylene) based surfactants, polyoxyethylene fatty acid amines, polyoxyethylene fatty acid esters, and any combinations thereof.

17. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 14, wherein said surfactant is polyoxyethylene fatty acid ester.

18. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 14, wherein said surfactant is polysorbate 20.

19. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 14, wherein said surfactant is present in an amount about 20 mg to about 140 mg per tampon pledget.

20. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 14, wherein said surfactant is present in an amount about 50 mg per tampon pledget.

21. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 1, further comprising an additional component selected from the group consisting of a fragrance, an odor absorbent, and any combination thereof.

22. (Original) A dry expanding tampon pledget comprising:

a plurality of non-absorbent fibers;

a plurality of absorbent fibers, wherein said plurality of non-absorbent fibers and said plurality of absorbent fibers are blended together,

wherein a percent ratio of said plurality of non-absorbent fibers to said plurality of absorbent fibers is about 25/75 to 70/30; and

an inverted coverstock having an interior surface adjacent to the blend of absorbent and non-absorbent fibers and an exterior surface opposite the interior surface, wherein said coverstock has a pleated insertion end bond, a pleated removal end bond, and a side

seam bond, and wherein said pleated removal end bond is on the interior surface of the inverted coverstock, away from the user's body.

23. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 22, wherein said insertion end bond and said removal end bond are pleated with about 1 to about 20 pleats.

24. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 23, wherein said insertion end bond and said removal end bond are pleated with about 6 to about 10 pleats.

25. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 22, wherein said percent ratio of said plurality of non-absorbent fibers to said absorbent fibers is about 40/60.

26. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 22, wherein said side seam bond is an external fin seal bond.

27. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 26, wherein said side seam bond is on said inner surface of said inverted coverstock away from said user's body.

28. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 22, further comprising a surfactant that is added to said plurality of non-absorbent fibers, said plurality of absorbent fibers, or both.

29. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 28, wherein said surfactant is one or more nonionic surfactants selected from the group consisting of alcohol ethoxylates,

alkylphenol ethoxylates, carboxylic acid esters, ethoxylated anhydrosorbital esters, glycerol esters, poly(oxyethylene-co-oxypropylene) based surfactants, polyoxyethylene fatty acid amines, polyoxyethylene fatty acid esters, and any combinations thereof.

30. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 29, wherein said surfactant is polyoxyethylene fatty acid ester.

31. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 30, wherein said surfactant is polysorbate 20.

32. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 28, wherein said surfactant is present in an amount about 20 mg to about 140 mg per tampon pledget.

33. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 28, wherein said surfactant is present in an amount about 50 mg per tampon pledget.

34. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 22, further comprising an additional component selected from the group consisting of a fragrance, an odor absorbent, an anti-bacterial agent, and any combinations thereof.

35. (Original) A tampon pledget comprising a removal string, wherein said removal string has a top loop slip knot, which secures the string to the pledget.

36. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 35, further comprising an inverted coverstock having an insertion end and a removal end, wherein said removal end has a seal.

37. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 36, wherein said removal string is secured to said removal end of said inverted coverstock at a position above said seal.

38. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 36, wherein at least one of said insertion end and said removal end has one or more pleats.

39. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 38, wherein said one or more pleats is about 1 to about 20 pleats.

40. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 39, wherein said one or more pleats is about 6 to about 10 pleats.

41. (Original) A method of making a tampon pledget having a coverstock, said coverstock comprising an insertion end and a removal end opposite said insertion end, the method comprising the steps of:

sealing said insertion end of said coverstock, thereby forming an insertion end seal bond;

pleating said sealed insertion end;

inverting said coverstock;

filling said inverted coverstock with a plurality of non-absorbent fiber and a plurality of absorbent fiber;

sealing said removal end of said coverstock, thereby forming a removal end seal bond; and

pleating said removal end.

42. (Original) The method of claim 41, further comprising the steps of:

securing a removal string to said pleated removal end of said coverstock; and

compressing said tampon pledget to a diameter less than that of a tampon applicator to be used to house said tampon pledget.

43. (Original) The method of claim 41, wherein said insertion end bond and said removal end bond each are pleated with about 1 to about 20 pleats.

44. (Original) The tampon pledget of claim 43, wherein said insertion end bond and said removal end bond each are pleated with about 6 to about 10 pleats.

45. (Original) The method of claim 42, wherein said removal string is secured to said coverstock at a point above said removal end seal bond.

46. (Original) The method of claim 42, wherein said removal string is secured to said coverstock by a top loop slipknot.